



Edens Valley Renew My Church Update: January 20, 2021

Discernment Process

St. Isaac Jogues, St. John Brebeuf, St. Lambert, St. Martha, including the Shrine of All Saints, and St. Peter Parishes engaged in the Renew My Church (RMC) discernment process through the fall of 2020. The Grouping Feedback and Discernment team (GFDT), which was made up of members from each parish community, met to review and discern the future parish structure for the area. Our deepest appreciation goes to the GFDT who prayerfully discerned the parish grouping structure during this challenging time.

Based on their meetings and feedback gathered from the larger parish communities, they submitted feedback to the archdiocese. The Archdiocesan Standards and Recommendations Commission, which includes representatives from across the Archdiocese of Chicago, reviewed the feedback and other information, including financial summaries, capital needs and parish trends.

Cardinal Cupich and Bishop Bartosic are grateful to Fr. Pereira, Fr. Meany, Fr. Simon, Fr. O'Neill, Fr. Kricek and the Grouping Teams who gathered throughout the past few months, and all parishioners who offered feedback through the recent discernment process.

Outcome

In the past few weeks, Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, the archdiocese's auxiliary bishops, and the archdiocese's Presbyteral Council met to discuss the Commission's recommendation. Based upon those discussions and prayerful consideration, Cardinal Cupich made the following decisions regarding the parish structure in Edens Valley (Niles, Morton Grove, Skokie):

- **St. John Brebeuf Parish and School will continue in their current structures.**
- **Effective July 1, 2021, St. Lambert and St. Peter will unite to form a new parish, continuing to use both churches for Mass.**
- **Effective July 1, 2021, St. Isaac Jogues and St. Martha will unite to form a new parish, continuing to use both churches for Mass. The Shrine of All Saints at St. Martha will continue to operate as an important ministry located on St. Martha's campus.**
- In each new parish above, the new parish will have one pastor and one pastoral team. Each united parish will receive a new name. The local community will discern possibilities for the new name, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit 3 to 5 options to Cardinal Cupich. Until Cardinal Cupich decides on a permanent name for the new parish, the new parish will have an interim name, using a combination of the two parish names.
- The united parishes will evaluate their ability to reduce auxiliary properties via sale or long-term lease.

Additional information will be forthcoming regarding the assigned pastors. We hope to share this information within the next few weeks.



Parish Structure Rationale

The Commission appreciated the GFDT's rich discernment and desire to vision creatively for a strong future presence in Morton Grove, Niles, and Skokie.

While there were scenarios that considered further unifications, the Commission's recommendation and Cardinal Cupich's decision were heavily impacted by creating a structure manageable for each pastor and parish leadership team. The three resulting parishes will have relatively similar numbers of parishioners and allow each pastor to tend to the demographic needs of each parish, particularly St. John Brebeuf supporting a strong Polish ministry. This grouping is encouraged to remain in conversation about supporting each other to serve the whole area.

Several key points from the GFDT's discernment were honored in the Commission's recommendation to Cardinal Cupich, such as:

- Respecting the relationships built between St. Lambert and St. Peter, as well as between St. Isaac Jogues and St. Martha
- The importance of the Shrine of All Saints
- Identifying ways to support the school ministry at St. John Brebeuf

Next Steps

Once a pastor has been named for each new parish, parish leadership and parishioners will discern possibilities for the name of the new parish, within guidelines provided by the archdiocese, and submit their considerations to Cardinal Cupich for his decision on the permanent name of the new parish. The new Mass schedule at each worship site, effective with the formal union of the parishes, will also be determined by the pastor in consultation with parish leadership in the coming months.

The three parish communities will embark upon the next phase of renewal, focusing on strong evangelization to the world around us. The renewal process calls us to become a stronger, more sustainable presence for the future, capable of reaching more people in their work of making disciples of Jesus Christ, building communities with one another and inspiring witness in the world around us.